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Letter dated 28 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the ministerial statement adopted at the thirtieth annual meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 22 September 2006 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13, 14, 18, 42, 51, 52, 55, 56, 112, 113 and 149.

(*Signed*) Dumisani S. **Kumalo**
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Chairman of the Group of 77

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Annex to the letter dated 28 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ministerial statement

1. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China met in New York, at the United Nations Headquarters, on 22 September 2006 on the occasion of their 30th Annual Meeting.

2. The Ministers stressed the importance of the implementation of the Outcome of the Second South Summit held in Doha, State of Qatar, from 12 to 16 June 2005. They committed themselves to the effective implementation of the Doha Plan of action as well as the outcomes of various follow-up meetings and conferences convened by the Group of 77 since the First South Summit held in Havana, Cuba from 10-14 April 2000.

3. The Ministers reaffirmed the outcome of the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 and China convened in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 29 May 2006 regarding the measures to reform and strengthen the United Nations, including its Secretariat, and reiterated the common position reflected in the G77 Ministerial Statement adopted by the Special Ministerial Meeting. The Ministers stressed the importance of ensuring that the interests of developing countries are reflected in the outcome of the negotiations to strengthen the United Nations.

4. The Ministers expressed serious concern over the suspension of negotiations which jeopardizes the delivery on the development promises of the Doha Round for developing countries and call upon the developed countries to demonstrate flexibility and political will necessary for breaking the current impasse in the negotiations. They recognized the mandates contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the WTO General Council decision of August 1, 2004 and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration. The Ministers called for a prompt resumption of the negotiations to place the needs and interests of developing countries, and in particular least developed countries, at the heart of the Doha Work Programme, which called for the successful and timely completion of the Doha round of trade negotiations with the fullest realization of the development dimensions of the Doha Work Programme.

5. The Ministers stressed the importance of facilitating the accession of all developing countries, in particular the LDCs, that apply for membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), consistent with its criteria and taking into account their development level, bearing in mind paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution 55/182 and subsequent developments, and called for the effective and faithful application of the WTO guidelines on accession by the LDCs.

6. The Ministers stressed the urgent need for comprehensive reform of the international financial architecture towards enhancing the voice and participation of developing countries and welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Chairman of G-77 and the Chairman of G-24 signed in Singapore on 14 September 2006 regarding, inter alia, the need for the effective voice, representation and participation of developing countries in the international decision making process, in particular in the international financial institutions.

7. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the role of United Nations in the area of development and poverty eradication. In this regard, they emphasized the need to strengthen ECOSOC and the importance of the operationalization of its new functions as mandated by the 2005 World Summit. They called for early conclusion of General Assembly consultations on the ECOSOC strengthening resolution and underscored the need for allocating additional resources for these new functions.

8. The Ministers reiterated the significance of increased financing for development, including the need to meet the long-standing target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA to developing countries, wider and deeper debt relief to developing countries, as well as ongoing efforts aimed at identifying additional, innovative sources of financing.

9. The Ministers called upon developed countries to ensure that information on their efforts to increase the volume of official development assistance is made available to the relevant United Nations intergovernmental bodies, including

through making best use of sources such as the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

10. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Meeting of Ministers of Science and Technology of the Member States of the Group of 77 held in Angra dos Reis, (Rio de Janeiro), Brazil on the 3rd September 2006, and in this regard commended the Government of Brazil for organizing the meeting. They also welcomed the decision to launch the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS) in accordance with the mandate of the Second South Summit (paragraph 35 of Doha Plan of Action).

11. The Ministers also welcomed the holding of the Second Experts Meeting of the Action Committee on Raw Materials (ACRM) in Abuja, Nigeria from 1st to 3rd August 2006 and stressed the need for action to facilitate the realization of the 7 objectives of the ACRM.

12. The Ministers further welcomed the ongoing preparations for the Ministerial Forum on Water Resources Management to be held in Muscat, (Sultanate of Oman) in the first semester of 2007 in accordance with the mandate of the Marrakech Framework for Implementation of South-South Cooperation (paragraph 26). In this context, the Ministers warmly welcomed the generous offer by the Government of the Sultanate of Oman to host this forum.

13. The Ministers stressed the importance of the full implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and in this regard noted the convening of the First Summit Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries on 14th September 2006 in Havana, the Republic of Cuba.

14. The Ministers stressed the full and timely implementation of the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Brussels Plan of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

15. The Ministers welcomed the offer of the State of Qatar to host the first follow-up Conference to review the implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, which will be held in Doha between 2008 and 2009.

16. The Ministers welcomed the convening, in New York, on 14 and 15 September 2006, of the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which provided an opportunity for discussing the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development. They called for an appropriate follow-up of the High-Level Dialogue within the United Nations.

17. The Ministers reiterated the urgent need to further strengthen the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 60/212 as the U.N System coordinating body for South-South Cooperation. They expressed their appreciation for the ongoing joint efforts by the Group of 77 and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation to revitalize South-South cooperation.

18. The Ministers welcomed the report by the Chairman of the Group of 77 on the G-77 Chamber of Commerce and Industry (G-77CCI), and approved its recommendations as contained in paragraphs 21 and 22 (document G-77/AM(XVIII)/2006/3).

19. The Ministers stressed the urgency of the operationalization of the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance as reiterated in paragraph 3 of their Ministerial Statement adopted on 22 September 2005. They welcomed the substantial contribution made by the State of Qatar and the generous contributions by India and the People's Republic of China. They requested the Chairman of the Group of 77 to undertake urgent consultations to submit for consideration by the Group before the end of 2006 the proposed guidelines of operation of the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance.

20. The Ministers warmly welcomed the generous contribution by the esteemed Government of the Sultanate of Oman of 1 Million US dollars to the South Summit Special Fund established by the First South Summit in order to assist the full

implementation and follow-up of the outcome of the South Summits in accordance with paragraph 104 of Doha Plan of Action. They also invited other Member States to contribute to the Special Fund as decided by the Second South Summit.

21. The Ministers approved the Report of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for ECDC/TCDC (PGTF) contained in document G-77/AM(XVIII)/2006/2 and endorsed its recommendations. The Ministers commended the Chairman of the PGTF Committee of Experts for his continued commitment and expressed their satisfaction with the results achieved by the PGTF and invited Member States to participate in the UN Pledging Conference to be held in New York on 15 November 2006. The Ministers empowered the Chairman of the PGTF Committee of Experts to finalize and sign the agreement with IFAD as well as other similar agreements and to this end appointed him as Chairman of PGTF.

22. The Ministers approved the Financial Statement of the ECDC Account of the Group of 77 contained in document G-77/AM(XVIII)/2006/8, as presented by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and urged those Member States that have not yet done so to make special efforts to pay their outstanding contributions.

23. The Ministers firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterate the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. They, therefore, called on the international community neither to recognize these measures nor apply them.

24. The Ministers condemned the Israeli aggression launched against Lebanon. They remained deeply concerned about the economic, humanitarian, social and environmental consequences of the Israeli aggression. They considered the systematic and widespread destruction of Lebanon's towns, villages, cities, and national infrastructure; compounded with the destruction of the economy's productive sectors, amounted to billions of dollars. The forgone gains and the opportunity cost in terms of development make this amount even higher. They, furthermore, called upon the international community to provide the necessary assistance to the Lebanese government and to the Lebanese people to help them achieve the early recovery and the subsequent rehabilitation and reconstruction of Lebanon.

25. The Ministers also called for the immediate Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 and the other Arab occupied territories. They reaffirmed their support for the Middle East peace process started in Madrid in 1991, and aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242(1967), 338(1973) and 425(1978) and the principle of land for peace. In this context, we support the peace initiative adopted by the Arab Summit in Beirut in March 2002.

26. The Ministers condemned the ongoing and intensifying Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people, which has resulted in the loss of civilian lives and the vast destruction of Palestinian properties, infrastructure and agricultural lands. The Ministers reiterated their deep concern at the intensifying hardships being faced by the Palestinian people as the result of the Israeli aggression, as well as at the increasing financial and political isolation being imposed on the Palestinian Authority by some members of the international community in the aftermath of the Palestinian legislative elections held in January 2006. They called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to refrain from withholding tax revenue transfers due to the Palestinian Authority, which is deepening the financial crisis of the Authority, and they also called on Israel to repair the damages caused to the Palestinian properties and infrastructure. They called upon the international community to provide much needed assistance to the Palestinian people.

27. The Ministers expressed their deep appreciation to South Africa for the excellent work and tireless efforts as Chair country of the Group of 77.

28. The Ministers welcomed the election of Pakistan to the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 in 2007.